



Magyar Örökség Washingtonban

Hungarian Heritage: Roots to Revival

THE HUNGARIAN PROGRAM OF THE 2013 SMITHSONIAN FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL, WASHINGTON, D.C.

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NORTH AMERICAN DANCE HOUSE REUNION

From the beginning of the intensive organizational process, starting in September 2012, we have been working on raising awareness about the festival among North American dancers interested in Hungarian folk dancing, many of whom are non-Hungarians. A dance house reunion was planned for the first three days of the festival, which was eventually attended by 6 dance ensembles and numerous individuals from all corners of North America. The Tisza and Rózsafa ensembles from Washington, D.C. were there, as well as the Csúrdöngölő from New Brunswick, the Regős from Cleveland, the Kodály from Toronto, the Napraforgó from Sarasota, and leaders of the Eszterlanc ensemble from San Francisco. József Salamon, director of the Csipke folk dance camp in Michigan, took it upon himself to coordinate a two-week-long Midwestern and East Coast tour for the Tükrös Band (partially sponsored by the Balassi Institute) during which the festival was advertised. Music for the three days of the reunion was provided by the Életfa band (its 6 members joined by Kálmán Magyar Jr.), who also gave a concert on the main stage together with the Csúrdöngölő ensemble. The musical repertoire was rounded out by the guest performances of fiddler László Orbán from Seattle, music teacher Jim Cockell from Edmonton, and violinist Jake Shulman-Ment from New York. Ildikó Nagy, a prominent personality in New York dance house circles, volunteered to coordinate the reunion. Kálmán Dreisziger, a leading figure in the Canadian dance house movement, moderated the discussions about the history of the North American dance house movement with

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the participation of several other important personages of the movement (e.g., Cathy Lamont, Judy Olson, and Zsuzsa Seres). The three generations of Kálmán Magyar's family, all of whom are prominent tradition bearers, were presented in a special program of their own. Members of the Washington, D.C.-area dance house community, like Steve Sinko, Zsuzsa Seres, and Cathy Lemont, opened their homes to accomodate reunion participants. It was also touching that Cathy Lemont, leader of the Tisza dance ensemble, donated the proceeds of their six-week-long spring workshop to offset the organizational costs of the reunion.

❧ A special feature of the reunion was a production of a Dezső Fitos choreography of dances from the Rábaköz region, which was made available on video about a month before the festival. Those who learned the choreography were invited to join the dancers from Hungary on the dance floor in front of the main stage. The second performance was unfortunately washed away by the rain, but the rehearsals and the first performance still provided an unforgettable experience.

THE BUDAPEST BISTRO AND THE TOKAJ TAVERN

❧ For two weeks in 2013, Hungarian was the most popular ethnic food in Washington, D.C. The term is used to describe any exotic cuisine aside from international haute cuisine and American regional traditions, and encompasses everything curious American audiences are eager to taste. Each of the three festival programs featured food, so visitors could try Afro-American classics and regional Asian and American native foods, but Hungarian cuisine seemed to enjoy the most acclaim.

Közreműködők / Participants

Zenészek, énekesek / Musicians, singers

SZALONNA ÉS BANDÁJA: Pál István Szalonna, Gombai Tamás, Karacs Gyula, Gera Attila, Doór Róbert, Ürmös Sándor

HEVEDER ÉS GÁZSA: Molnár Szabolcs, Fazakas Levente, Fazakas Albert, Szilágyi László,

Bajna György, Papp István Gázsa

JUHÁSZ CSALÁD: Juhász Zoltán, Juhász Réka, Juhász Dénes

TÜKRÖS: Halmos Attila, Koncz Gergely, Árendás Péter, Liber Endre, Lelkes András

BÍRÓ ESZTER ÉS ZENEKARA: Bíró Eszter, Födő Sándor, Nikola Parov, Papesch Péter, Hámori Máté

PARNO GRASZT: Oláh József, Oláh Krisztián, Oláh Viktor, Oláh János, Oláh Jánosné, Jakocskai János,

Horváth Sándor, Németh István

KOMLÓI VÖRÖS REZES: Schmidt Bálint, Schmidt Gábor, Tillmann Tibor, Németh Csilla, Deáky Péter

ÉLETFA: Hajdú-Németh Ildikó, Hajdú-Németh László, Ifj. Magyar Kálmán, Braňo Brinársky, Gartai József, Horváth József



"Great start with two programs at the Hungarian section, including the one with the flutes and bagpipes and the family that does that and the young woman that sings with her father, just terrific. They were really good. I enjoyed that a whole lot. I learned more about bagpipes." – Smithsonian visitor survey

Discussions also encompassed topics like collecting folk songs, the community of Roma musicians in Paszab, musical dynasties of Transylvanian Roma fiddlers, or researching traditional Jewish music. Tuvan musicians from the Endangered Languages program were invited to join Zoltán Juhász to discover, through a musical dialogue, similarities in the musical heritage of the two nations. The relationship of folk artist and apprentice was addressed, and the practice of the transmission of tradition from father to son was illustrated through the examples of families like the Juhász musical clan, the Magyar family from New Jersey, the Tótszegi family from Kalotaszeg and the Muszka family from Méra, or the Csontos shepherding family from Karcag. Folk costumes from Sárköz, Kalocsa, Kalotaszeg and Szék were shown. We talked about wedding traditions with the woman from Szék who makes wedding headdresses, and about the Hungarian community in Kishegyes in the Serbian Bácska region. In roundtable discussions, community leaders, activists and experts debated the significance of the folk music and folk dance movement in Hungary and America and informed the audience of the most active hubs of the Hungarian-American dance scene.

"The sections dedicated to Hungarian were great. It was fun and educational." – Yelp.com blog on the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, Katelin K., Silver Spring, 08-25-2013

The sign language interpreter reminisces: *"Well, my favorite was actually the segment on the Hungarian culture... the people had so much knowledge, and it was organized in quite the professional way."*

